

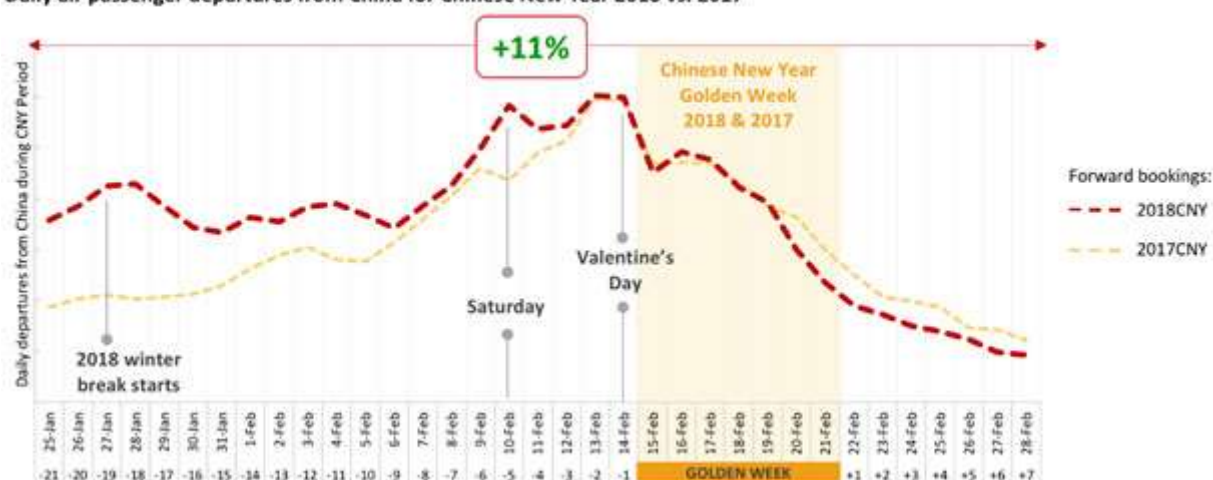
Chinese New Year travellers set to grow by 11%

The Chinese are travelling abroad in bigger numbers than ever to celebrate their coming New Year – the Year of the Dog. Daily international departures are ahead 11% on a comparable period last year – according to latest figures from ForwardKeys, which predicts future travel patterns by analysing 17 million flight booking transactions a day.

Chinese tourists are heading for destinations around the world, including many in South East Asia, which will experience an additional uplift because the Chinese are avoiding South Korea, owing to a diplomatic rift following the deployment of THAAD missiles there.

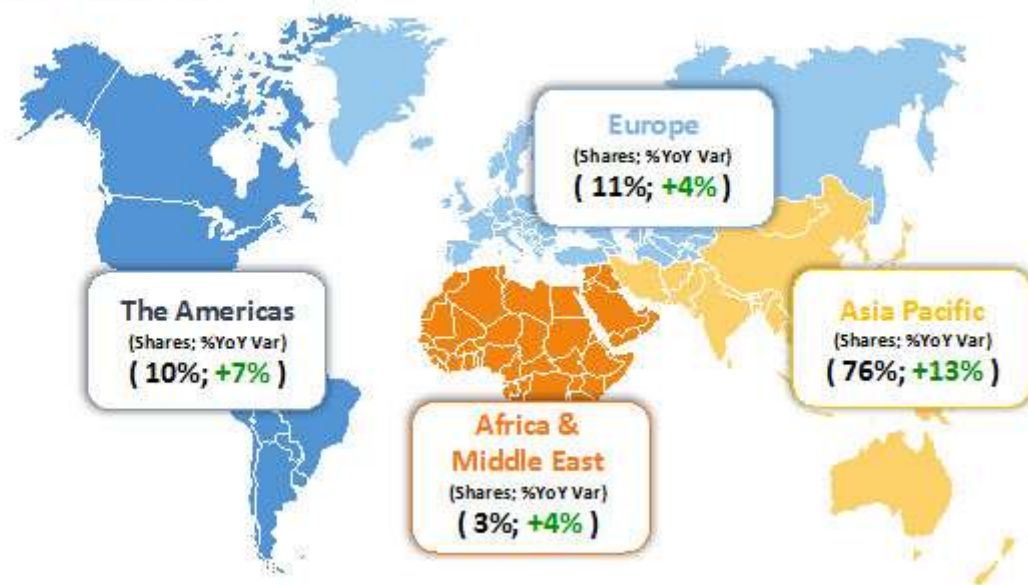
The ForwardKeys' findings show that Chinese travellers are making an early start from the beginning of their winter break at the end of January with figures already significantly ahead. Current bookings show that travellers will begin to peak from February 10 to February 14, ahead of the Chinese New Year (February 16) and the following Golden Week holiday.

Daily air passenger departures from China for Chinese New Year 2018 vs. 2017



Globally, Asia Pacific is the top destination region. It has a market share of 76%, ahead 13%. But other parts of the world – The Americas, Europe and Africa & the Middle East, are showing steady, healthy growth, as the Chinese become increasingly attracted to international travel.

Destination region performance

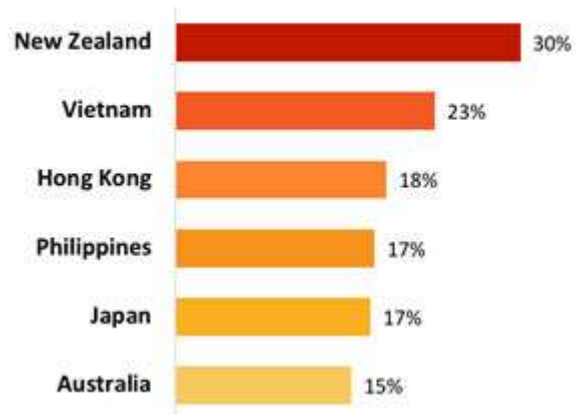


Japan, Thailand and Taiwan hold their positions as the top three destination countries. New Zealand tops the list of the fastest growing destinations – ahead 30% on last year, followed by Vietnam, ahead 22.5%, and Hong Kong, ahead 18.3%.

Top 3 Destination Countries

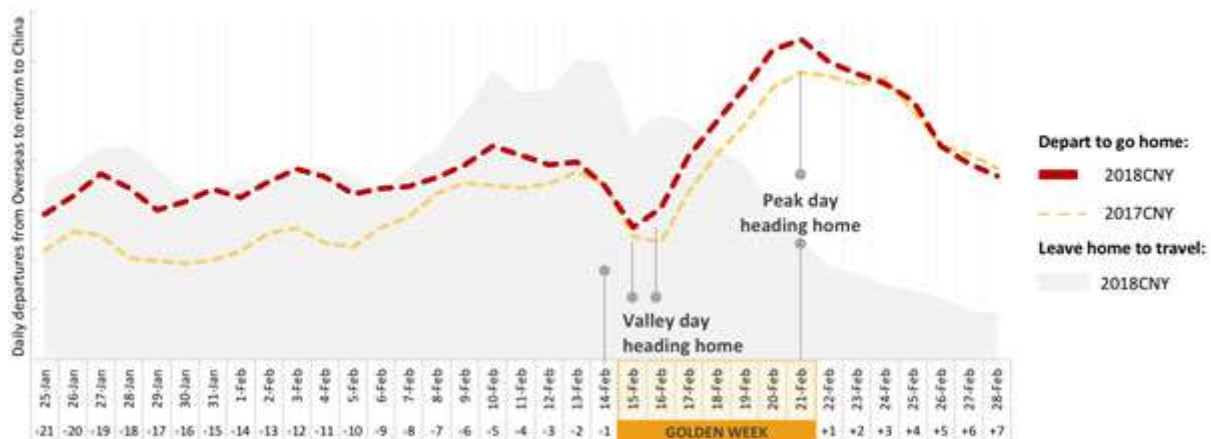


Top 5 most growing destination countries among top 15



The pattern for Chinese people heading home after the celebrations tracks last year's movement – peaking on February 21 at the end of Golden Week.

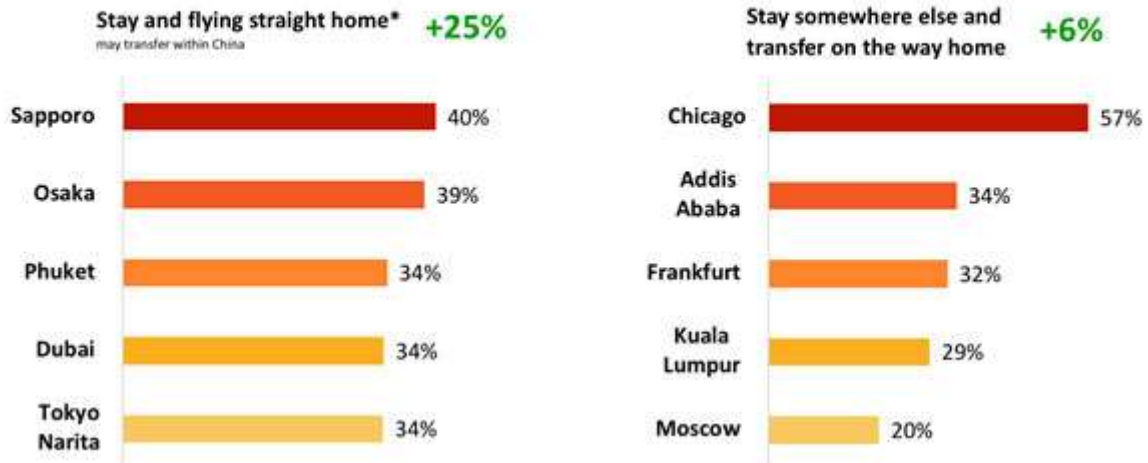
Daily departures from overseas back to China during Chinese New Year 2018 vs. 2017



Two airports in Japan see the greatest increase in returning numbers – Sapporo, ahead 40%, and Osaka, ahead 39%. They are followed by Phuket, Thailand, ahead 34%. Significantly, Dubai, also ahead 34%, is seeing more Chinese visitors than ever.

Chicago tops the list of those airports benefiting from Chinese homeward bound transfers.

Top 5 most growing airports (among Top 15) for departures from overseas back to China during Chinese New Year 2018



ForwardKeys CEO and co-founder, Olivier Jager, said: “The Chinese are enjoying more and more foreign travel as their outlook becomes increasingly international. It means that businesses have an excellent opportunity to provide services and goods to a growing Chinese clientele that is increasingly demanding and affluent. Purchases made en route play a big part in Chinese activity when travelling, which is why our latest figures will be of particular interest to global and duty-free retailers.”

Ends

About ForwardKeys

ForwardKeys predicts future travel patterns by crunching and analysing more than 17m booking transactions a day. It is used by travel marketers, retailers, hotels, destination marketing organisations (DMOs), financial institutions, car rental companies, tour operators, online travel agents (OTAs), and other traveller-focussed businesses worldwide to monitor and anticipate traveller arrivals and stay ahead of the trends from a particular origin market at a specific time. The analysis enables them to anticipate the impact of events, better manage their staffing levels, fine tune supply requirements, adjust and measure the effectiveness of their marketing efforts and predict future market trends. ForwardKeys' data is retrieved daily from all the major global reservation systems worldwide.

High Quality Video Availability

A broadcast-quality, "down the line" interview can be arranged with ForwardKeys from its studio in Valencia.

For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact: Sophie Luis +44 (0) 7961 145 787, sophie.luis@tarsh.com or David Tarsh +44 (0) 20 7602 5262, david@tarsh.com.